

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 10400

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, GR

SUBJECT: ROYALISTS STIRRING

1. GREEK ROYALISTS ARE STIRRING AGAIN. THE MOST INTERESTING AND IMPORTANT PUBLIC MANIFESTATIONS OF THIS ACTIVITY WERE THE ANNOUNCEMENT ON SEPTEMBER 25 OF THE CREATION OF A MONARCHIST PARTY, THE NATIONAL POPULAR PARTY (ETHNIKO LAIKO KOMMA), AND A PRO-ROYALIST EDITORIAL SEPTEMBER 28 IN THE RIGHT WING ELEFTHEROS COSMOS SIGNED BY THE PAPER'S LEADING EDITORIALIST (AND COVERT OWNER) SAVVAS KONSTANDOPOULOS.

2. THE NEW PARTY WAS FOUNDED BY RETIRED GENERAL GEORGE KOUROUKLIS AND ONE T. PANAGOPOULOS, A LAWYER, AS THE POLITICAL EXPRESSION OF THEIR MOVEMENT, THE "ROYAL UNION." THE DECLARED PURPOSE OF THE PARTY IS TO SUPPORT THE RETURN OF THE MONARCHY TO GREECE AND IT HAS ANNOUNCED IT WILL SEEK A NEW PLEBISCITE ON THIS MATTER. MORE INTERESTING AND MORE REVEALING THAN THE PARTY'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF ITS PURPOSES WAS A PAID ADVERTISEMENT IT RAN ON SEPTEMBER 28 IN ELEFTHEROS COSMOS, IN WHICH KOUROUKLIS AND PANAGOPOULOS MAKE IT CLEAR THEY ARE

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SEEKING TO UNITE MONARCHIST AND JUNTA SUPPORTERS.

IN THE AD THEY DENY THAT THEY HAD SUGGESTED
TO THE PRESS THAT THE NATIONAL POPULAR PARTY WILL EXCLUDE FORMER
JUNTA SUPPORTERS FROM ITS RANKS. TO THE CONTRARY, THE TWO
MEN STATE IN THE AD, THE PARTY WILL WELCOME ALL
"NATIONALISTS" (ETHNIKOFRONES)-- A TERM WHICH INCLUDES
ALL GREEK RIGHTISTS

3. THE KONSTAN
APOULOS EDITORIAL, ANTI-COMMUNIST AND PRO-ROYALIST,
IS LONG AND CONVOLUTED. BUT ITS BASIC ARGUMENT IS THAT THERE ARE
MONARCHISTS IN ALL (SIC) POLITICAL PARTIES AND THAT AT A TIME WHEN
GREECE IS FACED WITH TROUBLES THE RETURN OF THE MONARCHY COULD
SERVE TO UNITE THE GREEK NATION. THE EDITORIAL ALSO ENDORSES
THE LEADERSHIP OF THE NATIONAL POPULAR PARTY BUT RESERVES JUDGMENT
WHETHER THE PARTY WILL FINALLY SUCCEED IN ITS PRO-MONARCHY
PURPOSES.

4. COMMENT: THE PUBLIC EFFORT BY RIGHTISTS TO LINK MONARCHISTS
AND SUPPORTERS OF THE FORMER MILITARY REGIME IS A NEW
DEPARTURE HERE (THE LEFTISTS HAVE BEEN CHARGING
MONARCHIST-JUNTA COLLABORATION FOR SOME TIME) AND IS WORTH
WATCHING CLOSELY. ALL AVAILABLE EVIDENCE SUGGESTS TO US
THAT, BARRING A NATIONAL CATASTROPHE IN GREECE, THERE IS
NO POSSIBILITY THAT THE GREEK PUBLIC WOULD VOTE THE KING
BACK IN A PLEBISCITE. JUST AS WIDE OF THE MARK IS
KONSTANDOPOULOS' ASSERTION THAT THE RETURN OF THE KING
MIGHT UNITE GREECE. MOREOVER, NEITHER KOUROUKLIS NOR
PANAGOPOULOS ENJOY ANY SERIOUS STANDING ON THE
GREEK POLITICAL SCENE AND THEIR PARTY IS UNLIKELY TO ATTRACT
ANY SUBSTANTIAL SUPPORT. AT THE SAME TIME, THE ISSUE OF THE
MONARCHY HAS DEEPLY DIVIDED THE GREEKS FOR OVER A CENTURY.
IT IS NO LESS A POTENTIAL SOURCE OF BITTER DIVISION IN
GREECE TODAY THAN IT HAS BEEN IN THE PAST.
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